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Notes of the Week

AN event of primary importance for Australia, which few papers have noted, took place last week. The first sod was cut at Port Augusta, in South Australia, of a railway destined in three years' time to unite West Australia with the older and more populous States of the eastern portion of the island-continent. The line will be carried through the heart of the great desert, will be some 1,200 miles in length, and is estimated to cost at least £5,000,000; construction is to be begun at both ends. This route will be of strategic value, as by it troops could be despatched in twenty-four hours from Melbourne or Adelaide to Perth, the nearest port to India. It is also worthy of notice that the Commonwealth, having taken over the administration of the vast Northern Territory, which is at present very scantily inhabited, is making every effort to attract settlers to that region, and from reports furnished by the High Commissioner it appears that all kinds of semi-tropical produce can be grown there successfully. Population is steadily increasing in all the Australian States, and Western Australia, which until lately was the Cinderella of the Colonies, has more immigrants than any other State of the Commonwealth. Our readers interested in education will be glad to know that the new University at Perth has been formally opened, and Sir John Winthrop Hackett, K.C., has been elected Chancellor.

There are many nuisances to the suppression of which the Chief Commissioner of Police might have turned his attention before he issued his ultimatum upon the street distribution of the handbill, which, after all, can be disregarded if we wish. The loafers in the public parks, who accost any genial-looking person and suit their tale to the occasion, might be taken in hand with good results; malodorous house-refuse in byways not far from the City is collected at hours which we thought were illegal; and other small matters *pro bono publico* will occur to any observer. If it is true, as is stated, that £50,000 a year is spent in Greater London on handbills and their distribution, it seems as though one of our minor, unconsidered industries will suffer extinction.

According to an article which appeared in a daily contemporary last Wednesday, and which we read with feelings of awe, the American golfer must be constructed on a different plan from merely English humanity. It seems that he rises at six, and after several baths drinks a large glassful of iced water, partakes of half a melon, oatmeal porridge, bacon and eggs, baked potato, tea or coffee, more iced water, and "marmalade with toast and sweet cakes" to finish. This takes him safely to lunch-time without any violent pangs of hunger, and, having concluded his business in the city, he returns to the club to play golf; first, however, he must stay his cravings. "Soup, some meat, salad, blueberry pie, iced water, a glass of cold tea with a lump of ice in it and a piece of lemon, a large supply of ice-cream, and a big cigar"—thus internally propped and buttressed, he sallies forth to the game. Afterwards, more baths, a cigar, and then "a long American dinner, with vegetables very fancily done" (*sic*), corn cobs, sweet salads, plenty of iced water, ice-creams, ginger ale with lemon and ice, "and so forth." What Englishman could stand it for three days in succession. Even a quiet hour at marbles would seem too much to expect of him on a diet so severe!

It makes us think rather contemptuously of the intelligence of our fellows when we read the list of articles left in trains; who could possibly forget a bunch of 212 keys or a lamp-shade? Both of these were found in the Central London Tube, and are unclaimed. In this connection we note that the German railway officials have compiled a volume which might be termed a "luggage portrait album," containing photographs of every imaginable type of box, bag, basket, and trunk; so that the traveller who arrives minus a part of his equipment will only have to scan its pages to describe accurately the shape, complexion, and decorative scheme of the missing article. This sounds pleasant, and may save time; but it seems to leave a loophole for the expert railway thief; and what compensation awaits the Englishman ignorant of German who receives, after the catalogue number has been telegraphed, a bag the same shape and size as his own, containing, instead of the spare clothing for a holiday, a set, let us say, of burglar's tools? How will he escape, if we may not go yachting in German waters without suspicion?

Dans Les Bois

J'ENTENDS là les mille voix
Dont la nature est pleine
Non sans soupirer parfois
Et me remplir de peine.

Pareils à nos hirondelles,
Ces sons harmonieux,
Ont-ils peut-être des ailes
Pour s'envoler aux cieux?

Oui! ces échos fugitifs
Sont adieux à la vie
Que disent des cœurs captifs
Rendus à leur patrie.

J'écoute, l'âme tremblante,
Amour saint, éternel!
Heureuse la voix qui chante
Ton hymne solennel.

GWENDOLEN TALBOT.

The Imitation Critic

THOUGH it is true, within limits, to say that the poet is "born, not made," the real critic may be anything but a critic by birth. He may be of a retiring, contemplative disposition, hating discussion and disagreement, yet compelled by his sense of justice to display before the eyes of other men the knowledge gained in his solitary years, to stick pins into inflated mediocrity, even to wield a vigorous sword in the tourneys of controversy. There is another type of critic, however, in whom, almost as soon as he can walk, flourishes an art of detraction often mistaken for criticism; the genuine critic, *bien entendu*, dealing as much with approval as with censure.

This imitation critic, as we may term him, possesses in an uncommon degree the happy knack of forming a definite opinion about everything, from the spectrum of Sirius to the latest novel; which would not matter very much, if only he would keep his opinion to himself; by the nature of his mental economy, however, he must orate upon his discoveries. Occasionally, therefore, he wins a fleeting fame in a restricted circle by the sheer weight of his didacticism; he is referred to by superficial observers as one who "knows a thing or two" about most subjects, the fact being that he is like the vagrant sparrow—fat with the crumbs from other people's meals, an expert at nothing but the pompous phrase and the impertinent platitude.

He is sometimes, we must admit, quite a wonderful mannikin, as he leans from his little home-made Olympus and dispenses the spurious ambrosia to the neophytes that twitter round his feet; he apes a divine

discontent with the world, has the airs and graces—and often, unfortunately, the eloquence—of Hortensius; and nothing can disturb his belief in himself. For invariably the imitation critic is an egoist of the bluest Patterne blood, delighting in the reverberations of his own voice, bearing charitably with those who are misguided enough to hold opinions differing from his own; and as an egoist, it is a pure pleasure—or a pathetic experience, according to your point of view—to watch him when confronted and tackled by a man of mark. He will argue a professor into silence, if the professor happens to be modest and of an equable temper: for if it be music, he can talk the language of the schools, and by murmuring of "tone-colour," "light and shade," or "balance," reduce you, who are not a professor, to a state of resentful admiration; if it be art, he has all the studio-phrases handy, and will speak familiarly of "values," and perhaps spring upon you a word such as "architectonics," a veritable boulder of a word, when, of course, there is nothing more to be said. But, given an irascible and thoroughly equipped opponent, his contortions make an edifying spectacle and a warning to the unwary. Keep him to the point, and it impales him at once.

As a rule, however, he is ignored by professors, scholars, and the critics genuine; he makes so much noise that they shy at his approach like a restive horse at the sudden squawk of a motor-horn; thus he is generally left to his own spell-bound circle. Here, like the frog of Æsop, he can sit and puff himself out complacently, sure of the hum of applause, sure of the timid question which he will answer so beautifully, sure of being a hero. For to worship is a necessity of humanity, and young humanity in especial has phases when the imitation critic serves as a passable, if transitory, object on whose brow the laurel-wreath may rest. If in a short time the disciple wakes to his prophet's frailty and sees the laurels slipping, so that a slightly intoxicated appearance imperils the aforetime dignity, what matters? Youth easily transfers its adoration—there remain other heroes yet untried; and the kindergarten of the imitation critic, depleted of one member, gains another novice in due course.

By his very agility—his rapidity of fire, if we may so put it—he sometimes manages to hit the target, just as a poor marksman free with his ammunition must find an occasional chance bull's-eye to his credit; and then his friends hear about it until they wish that a beneficent Mother Nature had provided them with earflaps as well as eyelids. Disagreeable sights can be avoided; unpleasant sounds must be borne; and, unless we are sternly resolved to note only the comedy of manners—unless, in short, we are cynico-philosophic by training—the self-satisfied quacking of the imitation critic is a very unpleasant sound indeed. In time, however, it dies down; and in the grateful interval we have leisure to wonder what, if his eyes were opened to the patchwork garment which he takes so contentedly to be cloth of gold, he would find to say about himself.

WILFRID L. RANDELL.

REVIEWS

Songs of Sorts

Songs of a Syrian Lover. By CLINTON SCOLLARD. (Elkin Mathews. 2s. 6d. net.)

Poems. By CLIFFORD KING. (Kegan Paul and Co. 5s. net.)

Vale: A Book of Verse. By LEONARD INKSTER. (A. C. Fifield. 1s. net.)

The Listeners, and Other Poems. By WALTER DE LA MARE. (Constable and Co. 2s. 6d. net.)

Songs of the Open Air. By GEORGE A. GREENE. (Elkin Mathews. 3s. 6d. net.)

Songs of the Prairie. By ROBERT J. C. STEAD. (Gay and Hancock. 1s. 6d. net.)

THE Syrian lover, *vice* Mr. Clinton Scollard, is a very consistent and very insistent young man. Not to put too fine a point on it, he harps too much on one string. A genius, no doubt, would find endless melodic opportunity in the one string, and this Eastern serenader tinkles very prettily so far, but he scarcely commands the requisite capital. Mr. Scollard's indubitable skill has not sufficient solid material to work on, in spite of all the lovely verbal aid the Syrian fiction lends. Nard, musk, minaret, muezzin, bulbul, djinn, Ras-el-Ain, Trebizond—they all sound well in the rhythmic cadences of verse, though even then Mr. Scollard has a lingering affection for certain Western words and phrases of his own, such as "wraith" and "shut of twilight." But fifty lyrics, averaging eight lines each, trying fruitless comparisons with pretty much the same monotonous triumph for the unique She—well, one is pretty, three is enough, and fifty is satiety. We are convinced, however, that when Mr. Scollard can feel deeply and sincerely enough he has not only lyrical facility but lyric power.

It would be quite just to credit Mr. Clifford King with considerable information, a certain play of imagination, and good intentions—but he evidently has no idea as to what poetry is. He seems to think that as long as his tide of eloquence breaks up into so many "feet," and periodically, by good fortune, a couple of words strike an approximate similarity of sound that does duty for rhyme, the result is poetry, whereas it is really vanity and vexation of spirit. We have found in these pages nearly all the prosodical vices of the beginner: the any-port-in-a-storm leap for a rhyme, the stretch-me-out-and-I'll-just-do-it line endings, the clumsy elisions, awkward inversions and paddings. Here is a brief example of his craft:—

Yea, all the night is loveliness itself
And shines with beauties, earthly, heavenly,
Which charms in luxury the liquid gulf
Spread like ten thousand mirrors of the sky.
Oh, God, the glory is most wondrous in
Its hallowed majesty! It dazes the
Rude eye of man—so drunken by the scene—
That views the whole, multi-divinity!
Could we but now . . .

Need we go on any further? As dramatist he is coincidental, bathetic, rife with the tragic "Ha-ha!" As

satirist he is pathetic; as sonneteer more than liberal—red radical; as a writer of album verses he comes into his own.

We should like to think that Mr. Inkster's neat little book is misnamed also. There is an air of experiment about it and some promise of issue. His gift is not best adapted, perhaps, to the restricted forms. A number of sonnets, while technically fairly true, are something lacking in conclusiveness, a little inclined to incoherence, while a couple of villanelles scarcely ripple along with that even runlet-music which one expects in a villanelle. A single rondeau is by far the most successful of the experiments in these forms. But the residue of the book contains the best things, as "The Journalist's Chant," a repudiation of Wilde's sneer at the mercenary of the pen, which reveals considerable power; "To My Walls," sub-titled "A Backwater in London," which has a refreshing individuality; and, best of all, the section inscribed "For Sweethearts." We should like to quote from one of his group, called "Portraits," as evidence of Mr. Inkster's felicity when his muse is unconstrained; but space will not permit.

Mr. De La Mare's poems should be read in some haunt of ancient peace, some leafy arbour just within sight of the mellow, creeper-clad brick of an old manor. Yet perhaps we are wrong. If he can call up that association and hold us spellbound in the *blat* surroundings proper to modern life his place is emphatically there, and we owe him grateful thanks. In the even, musical flow of his verse, so delightfully innocent of artificiality, so limpid and sure, he recalls the charm now of Wordsworth, now, in some elusive way, of the Vaughans, now of Herrick. He has the gift in a remarkable degree of drawing lyric portraits, such as the lovely little thing of "Rachel" or that of "The Tailor," or this of "poor Miss Loo":—

Her tabby cat, her cage of birds,
Her nose, her hair—her muffled words,
And how she'd open her green eyes,
As if in some immense surprise,
Whenever as we sat at tea
She made some small remark to me.

And presently:—

. . . with gaze of vacancy,
And large hands folded on the tray,
Musing the afternoon away;
Her satin bosom heaving slow
With sighs that softly ebb and flow,
And her plain face in such dismay,
It seems unkind to look her way.

Charming he is, too, when he touches the borderland of enchantment, as in "The Witch," "Never-To-Be," "The Dark Château," and "The Listeners." All of these poems are short, but their brevity is full of delicate suggestion. They are like the chaste, translucent thoughts of one who himself looks out on the world with eyes that are clear and soft with the tender simplicity of a child's dreams.

Mr. Greene's songs are pleasant enough, but scarcely

confess that breeziness and spaciousness that we are wont to associate with the open air. The greater part are fairly good exercises of a careful pupil of the Muse, but they lack the sufficient personal quality which would make them of the living stuff of poetry. Here and there, however, Mr. Greene seems to respond to a breath of the genuine air, and the pulse of his song is correspondingly heightened. We would instance "Inisfail" (which surely betrays Mr. Greene a son of Erin?), "Ad Canem," "A Mood," and "Snowbell," a musical little poem.

The twin deities of colonial poets seem to be Mr. Kipling and Mr. Geo. R. Sims. We do not presume to quarrel with the election; we simply state it as a curious fact, and bring forward Mr. Stead's volume as the latest example. He rattles along merrily to the measure of a seven-foot or eight-foot line, and is a practised hand at the camp-fire yarn kind of thing:—

Ned M'Cann owned the Double Star 'way back in the
early days;
He had come out here with a sickly wife and a kid
he hoped to raise

There you have style the first, and for the alternative:—

He is brand-new out of England, and he thinks he
knows it all—
(There's a bloomin' bit o' goggle in his eye) . . .

Much more worthy of a serious reading is "The Mothering," in which Mr. Stead expresses the call of the virgin land to be loved of its adopted sons. We should like to give it whole, but have space only for two of the concluding stanzas:—

Then I gave him hopes he could not define and fears
that he could not flee;
And he heard my cry in the long, still night,
In my spirit-thrall I held him tight,
And his blind soul-eyes craved for the light;
But the light he could not see.

So I held my peace till I saw him sit with children at
his knee;
And I sent them the sun, the wind and the rain,
And the ferny slope and the flowery plain,
And the wet night-smell of the growing grain;
And their love they gave to me.

If we could have a little more of that and a little less of the Kipling-cum-Sims decoction we should begin to listen with quickened interest to the voices that sound from the prairie.

A Teller of Stories

May I Tell You a Story? By HELEN MAR. (J. and J. Bennett, Ltd. 2s. 6d. net.)

"MAY I tell you a story?" The familiar words will awaken many memories—memories of drawing-room entertainments, charity concerts, or comfortable evenings at the theatre. To the present writer they recall, with a quite wonderful vividness, a certain dinner in a central London hotel. The Royal toasts have been duly honoured. The cigars have been lit, the port has

gone round. There is a general feeling of post-prandial contentment, and the murmur of many voices rises to the ceiling like an incantation. Suddenly a door at the back of the dining-hall is thrown open. A tall, graceful woman in evening dress appears. She faces the company.

"May I tell you a story?"

There is an instant pause in the conversation. The appeal is frankly irresistible. The lady has the air of one having inadvertently broken in upon some important business. There is a semi-apologetic note in the request so shyly proffered, a note which is somehow emphasised by that frankly American accent which Helen Mar, despite her long residence in this country, has never succeeded in discarding. Heads are turned in the direction of the speaker. There is a moment's pause. Then Miss Mar proceeds to tell us a story. She tells us, indeed, not one story, but many. Ripples of merriment go round the room. At length—but all too soon—the last story is told. With a charming curtsy she descends the platform—vanishes—and leaves us all mightily pleased with ourselves, and still more pleased with our entertainer.

It may be doubted whether Miss Mar has done wisely in entrusting her stories to the unsympathetic medium of print. Told, they are inimitable; read, they are merely funny. They have no force of personality behind them. One misses the delicate inflections of voice, the characteristic gestures, the indescribable smile. Once Miss Mar's peculiar property, they are now the world's. She has relinquished her hold upon them. . . . But perhaps she thinks they have served their turn? Perhaps she intends to delight us with a new *répertoire*?

The book itself is delightfully feminine. It is one of those chatty, colloquial, inconsequential, discursive volumes that only a woman could write, and that, unfortunately, so few women do write. Professedly an autobiography, it is in reality a series of disjointed impressions. But there is a frankness and a naïveté about it that will ensure for it a hearty welcome from all those who value sincerity in autobiography rather than pretentiousness.

Miss Mar began her professional life as a reciter—a fatal mistake, as she was afterwards to discover. For the world—or, at any rate, that part of it which is willing to pay for its entertainments—does not love recitations. And, incidentally, the world is quite right. Miss Mar learnt wisdom, some years ago, at Prince's Galleries, in Piccadilly. She had been "booked" for a recitation, and she happened to overhear a lady say: "For Heaven's sake, let's make our escape; someone is going to recite." Not very encouraging; but it set Miss Mar thinking. Her mind was quickly made up. Brevity, it has been said, is the soul of wit. She determined that she would try its effect upon her audiences. In the future, not recitations—but stories! And, as she was an American, they should be American stories. "And that," she tells us, "is how I began to tell 'A few American stories.'"

Since that day Miss Mar has established a reputation as the most popular of living story-tellers. She has amused princes and paupers, has assisted at society functions and at humbler entertainments in the East-end, where she is always secure of a welcome. She has some interesting things to tell us about her audiences. Oddly enough, she prefers clergymen. "If I were able to choose those whom I am called upon to try and amuse," she writes, "I should always make sure that clergymen were present. They make absolutely the very best audiences one could have. Broad-minded, enthusiastic, and with a keen sense of humour—which last is, indeed, the saving grace." Here is an unexpected tribute to "the cloth."

Turning to the stories themselves, it seems a little invidious to select any particular one for special praise. Readers will naturally choose their own favourites. But the following deserves—nay, demands—quotation:—

A very rich American came to London, and met an Englishman, who—strangely enough—liked him and asked him to his house.

The Englishman was a great collector of antiques, curiosities, etc., and showed the American, among other things, a table and a chair and, pointing to them, said: "That table and that chair once belonged to Milton."

"Really," said the American, and knelt down and reverently kissed both table and chair.

"And," continued the Englishman, "that table was the very one on which that immortal classic, 'Paradise Lost,' was written."

"What was written?" questioned the guest.

"'Paradise Lost,'" was the reply.

"Who wrote it?" again questioned the A—.

"Milton," replied the host.

"Who did you say *owned* that table?"

"Milton," again answered the host.

"Gosh!" ejaculated the rich one, in a tone of disgust. "I thought you said *Lipton*!"

One more—and only one more:—

A man went up to a friend and said, "Did you know that Jones was going to run away with your wife?"

"Why run?"

There are some dozens of others. Thank you, Miss Mar, for a very pleasant entertainment!

Mr. Stephen Phillips' New Play

The King: A Tragedy in a Continuous Series of Scenes.
By STEPHEN PHILLIPS. (Stephen Swift and Co. 2s. 6d. net.)

It is chastening to reflect on the way Mr. Phillips' work has fallen from esteem. A matter of a few years ago, he was spoken of in terms that seemed to hail him as a brother to Shakespeare; now there are none so poor to do him reverence. It is a characteristic of the way journalistic reviewers, having no just standards of appreciation, are always eager to whet their appetites by seeking new loves. For if "The King" be compared

with "Olysses," there will not be found a vast difference in their conception and execution. The conception in both is rather theatrical than dramatic; even as the execution has none of that wondrous flexibility that one associates inevitably with great dramatic work. With the exception of "Herod," his work has always seemed to us, from the earliest days, rather workmanlike than passionate, rather preconceived than inevitable. Had reviewers treated his early work with care and discriminating examination, rather than with the merely stupid blame or stupid praise with which they always greet newcomers, a different tale might have been told. As it is, in reading "The King" one has the feeling of an artistic tragedy.

In his Note to "The King" Mr. Phillips tells us that it "is constructed after the Greek and not the Shakespearian model, and is divided into a series of scenes, not acts." In point of fact, in its mobility of scene it is more Shakespearian than Greek. It is not at all desirable that we should nurse these time-worn labels, that more often confuse than elucidate. Moreover, it is questionable if more than half of modern dogmas concerning the construction of Greek Drama are not the result of our ignorance of the conditions under which Athenian Drama was presented. Yet in so far as they mean anything, and in so far as they connote anything, the fundamental distinction between Shakespearian and Greek drama is one of a variety of scene. And when Mr. Phillips divides his play into five scenes, he might just as well have divided it into five acts without affecting anything more than the nomenclature.

When we spoke of his drama as being more theatrical than dramatic, we touched on what has always seemed to us the fundamental weakness of his whole work: and it is very marked in "The King." The story in the present tragedy is that of a king whose son has won great glory for himself, and for whom his father chooses a worthy match with the Princess of Portugal. But that son is in love with one of the ladies of the court; with whom, indeed, he is more deeply pledged than he thinks. For on his return from the great wars he learns from her that she expects a child. So he declares to his father that it is she he loves, and that he can wed no other. Then his father tells him that the girl is no other than his half-sister. At this terrible news the two die together; and the father, who has abdicated in favour of his son, has to resume the throne.

If simplicity of phrase and manner could give conviction to a play, "The King" would convince. But there is no drama where there is no vitality of characterisation; and it is just this that Mr. Phillips lacks. Neither the King, nor Don Carlos, nor Donna Christina, live and move and have their being before us. They are persons of whom something is told. Consequently, to get movement and the hint of vitality into them, Mr. Phillips must employ the uses of the theatre to stuff them with the semblance of life. For example, at the conclusion of the first scene, when the prince has learnt his father's intentions for him, and asks for a delay

ere he decide, the dialogue states the situation in a calm economy of words, stirring nothing of the vividness of the situation in us. It closes in an entire lack of conviction. Then, what his characters could not give, Mr. Phillips must needs give us, from without and as the stage-manager of his people. We are told in a stage direction that "the Prince passes his hand over his brow in a gesture of doubt and terror."

To say that this is a fault of versification is to state what is obvious. And yet it is not true to say that a merely accomplished versification could give us great drama. Nevertheless, without a subtlety of line there can clearly not be a subtlety of character; and without a terror of line there cannot be a terror of scene. How well Shakespeare knew this can be seen in many and many a passage where the power of vivid metaphor is made to awaken a power of passion. But Mr. Phillips' verse is stiff, unornate, and static; and these are not qualities that can very well express drama, which is nothing if it is not chiefly subtle, coloured, and passionate. Whatever might and passion are contained in this play proceed outside the borders of the verse, and are to be found in stage directions. The reason simply is that the verse is not of such a quality that it can contain it. Consequently we are irked by a misfit somewhere; and the play falls broken in our hands.

"The King" is slight in proportion; yet in its carefulness of workmanship, and its even melody of phrase, it is, within its limits, an interesting piece of work. There is a depreciation in it from Mr. Phillips' early work; but there is by no manner of means a difference sufficient to account for the present falling away of attention. It lacks inspiration, that strange indefinable thing; but its chief lesson is that it proves that drama cannot be written without passion.

Poetry and Perversity

The Clouds. By CHARLES M. DOUGHTY. (Duckworth and Co. 5s. net.)

ANY poetry that the reader rebels at should be a challenge to what his conception of poetry is. His conception may pass the challenge, or it may fall before it; in either case, the result is surely healthy if the inquiry be candid. The substantial fact is that the challenge has been made; and that it was right to make it. For no poet delivers his substance to his fellow men without at least the semblance of a worthy and noble motive—and from the word poetry one exempts satires or trivialities in verse. Ambition is not an infirmity, but some kind of an attestation of worth: which may turn awry or may be sound, but which claims the right of an equal tourney in the lists.

To say, therefore, that we do not like, that we can scarcely read with patience, Mr. Doughty's poetry, is to say nothing of moment. Nor does it materially affect the question that our feelings with regard to his work are not confined to the above volume, but no less to the

six volumes of the "Dawn in Britain," to "Adam Cast Out," and to "The Cliffs." Of these, "Adam Cast Out," by its stern elimination of all that is not in the severest sense germane to the matter, wins a chastened and rigorous beauty despite much uncouthness, and should have a place among certain individual poems destined to memory. The "Dawn in Britain," despite some passages of beauty, seems to have overawed a certain number of shallow critics chiefly by its length and its perplexity. But in the present volume the whole problem his work raises is put in its simplest form. For "The Clouds" is patriotic poetry of deliberate intention, and for some reason that is not very hard to discover patriotic poetry is a severe test to any poet's performance. In it he abjures the high fountains of poetic inspiration, and has to come down to the ways of declamation; he has to deny the very essence of poetry in denying the unity and brotherhood of Man, and deny it not by neglecting it, but by attacking it. Moreover, he has to deny other things. He may be even called upon to deny a possibly higher worth in another race of men—a more distinguished morality, a stricter and purer loveliness of personal and civic life. Therefore, being without the inevitable aid of inspiration, he will have to rest more securely on his tricks of style, his mannerisms, and methods.

Turning, then, to "The Clouds," what is the element that most strikes the reader as he journeys through the book? Take, for example, the following passage from the "Proeme":—

A Land of Sighing! shall be vast lament:
Yet less were all than able to express,
In Her souls anguish, Britains last distress.
What marvel if Isle Britains soil once more
Invaded were, wherein so manifest scars
Of wounds received in many former wars
Remain? Where is not of the Invaders foot;
Reaving, manslaying, burning as he went,
Some token in Britains earth? What English march
Is there; whereas some hill-top is not crowned,
With old fossed rampires of invader armies?
Mounds of war-slain bear witness everywhere.

There are many passages in the book that are almost laughably grotesque; but to quote such passages is obviously mischievous; and the above, in its consecutive meaning, is a very fair example of the ordinary tenour of Mr. Doughty's style. It is free of the anterior beauty that poetry endeavours to see and express: therefore its method has to stand by itself. And what is that method? There are hints throughout his work (more than hints indeed) that he is seeking to write English poetry deliberately in Arabic syntax. Whether this be so or not, one can but judge from the result; and that result is an insecurity of rhythm (so insecure that it requires to be helped out by accents), and a steadfast habit of inversion that not only inverts the grammatical sequence of a sentence, which is no great matter, but which bears no relation to an emotional sequence of idea. In other words, it is a mannerism deliberately employed to a certain end. One may grow inured to it

after reading a number of pages; but that is a different thing from winning the secret of a spontaneous manner.

What, then, is the end to be gained? It would be ridiculous to say that the poetry of the future must merely be bound by the poetry of the past, though it is worth recollecting that beauty is not two things, but one, and that poetry is not its invention so much as its expression. Yet it is a fact that scarcely any great poet has ever sung but has expressed the thing that burned in him in the way of metaphor and imagery. It is not very difficult to see the reason of this. For poetry, avoiding the way of direct statement, expresses itself in a ritual of the imagination, a ritual that is full of significance to the soul. The result is that the expression of great poetry is never obvious; its approach is always incalculable. Now the same quality of indirect approach is characteristic of the passage we have quoted, and of the major portion of Mr. Doughty's work. But how different the two methods are! One floods the mind with a mental excitement almost impossible to bear. The other does not strike on the imagination, but only irritates the intellect.

To say of "The Clouds" that there are moments in it of a quality quite pure and simple is, as doubtless Mr. Doughty would himself be the first to admit, neither here nor there. Such moments must always appear in a continued body of poetry. But that they have a distinct quality of their own only confirms our opinion that he has more or less deliberately adopted the puzzled manner and syntax of the overwhelming portion of the book, not perhaps as an attempt to baffle understanding (no man truly does this), but certainly from a desire to escape the obvious manner, the direct statement, and the lack of an imaginative ritual that marks the thing that is prose from the thing that is poetry. It is, in fact, an attempt to set up another kind of ritual. But to excite the imagination to moods that mean more than words can envisage is quite a different thing from bewraying the intellect by involving the syntax of a sentence.

In the present volume it is characteristic that the poem "The Muses' Garden" is most marked by the spirit of poetry. If one may be suffered to speak in the twisted language of the professional philosopher, in that poem he draws on the poetic content without expressing it in its own high ritual. But the fact remains that he does draw on the poetic content—which is more than one can say of the bulk of the poems in the book. Mr. Doughty's patriotic intention has snared his feet in strange ways. For example, to find working men of the Eastern Counties discussing the foreign invasion in a dialogue constructed on the principles of syntax that prevail in other portions of the book is rather apt to make one think that war has had an unhappy and untoward effect upon them. It is not many carpenters that soliloquise thus:—

Rain miserably again falling, towards the day,
Helped quench vast dying flames; whose bitter breath
Yet covered the cold stars; and borne was forth,
On the immense bosom of the wakening wind.
Parents still wandered, seeking children lost!
Was battle looked for, shortly to be joined.

Nor are we inclined to be particularly lenient towards the one who does.

Yet, apart from the particular faults that attend on the poet who mounts the platform, the underlying fault of Mr. Doughty's work is a much deeper matter. It is that he has put it into an impossible, and sometimes laughably grotesque, mould, and violated the spirit of poetry in so doing.

Jerusalem: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern

The Story of Jerusalem. By COLONEL SIR C. M. WATSON.
Illustrated by Genevieve Watson. (J. M. Dent and Sons. 4s. 6d. net.)

Palestine Exploration Fund Annual, 1911. (Published by Order of the Committee.)

MESSRS. DENT and SONS' "Medieval Towns" series has already obtained so secure a position in the favour of connoisseurs that it is hardly possible for any new volume to enhance its reputation. If, however, these books still require a favourable introduction in any quarter to which they have not yet penetrated it is certain that none other of them will the more readily open the portals of favour than that on Jerusalem, one of the most recently issued. Apart from the perennial and entrancing interest which the subject of the monograph wields throughout the civilised world, Christian, Mohammedan, and Jewish, an author has been chosen for the present volume who is without question the one best qualified of all living who use the English language as a medium. Sir Charles Watson, as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, is in an unrivalled position to become acquainted with and to estimate at their true value even the minutiae of the discoveries which are being made almost weekly by the Fund and kindred organisations, whereby the interstices of Palestinian history are gradually being filled. In the hands of some this extensive knowledge would prove unwieldy and render an intelligent account within moderate compass impossible; Sir Charles Watson, however, adds to his extensive knowledge of his subject an exceptional power of co-ordination and selection. The facts which he selects with unerring instinct from his abounding wealth he binds together by means of a literary style both easy and pleasing, and as a result he has produced a book that fascinates and holds the attention enchained from the first page to the last.

"The Story of Jerusalem" is in reality far more than that which the general title of the series suggests. The author recognises that the story of Medieval Jerusalem cannot adequately be told unless that of Ancient Jerusalem is offered as a preface; and when he finds his narrative passing out of the Middle Ages it is impossible

for him to stop until he has reached almost the present day. Thus the history opens in very early Biblical times, and is continued to the close of the nineteenth century, and the comment of the reader will be one of regret that this story of Jerusalem has come to an end. Under the reverent pen of Sir Charles Watson the perennially interesting Bible narrative is revived, the romantic history of the most romantic of cities is re-told, and the most interesting of all histories is placed at the disposal of all readers. To the visitor to the Holy City this volume will prove invaluable; to the much larger public to which the Holy Land can be no more than a dream this book should occupy a secure and always accessible place on the book-shelf.

A source of annoyance to the intelligent visitor to Jerusalem is always the numerous identifications—generally in duplicate, as each Christian denomination is always eager to possess all that is desirable in this respect—of the sacred sites, most of which are of course absurdly distant from the truth. It is not surprising that Sir Charles Watson discards practically all the identifications, and is extremely restrained and conservative with regard to those to which he gives consideration. He might, however, have shown much more hesitation before accepting as authentic (p. 99) the passage in Josephus which refers to Jesus. This is now almost universally admitted to be a relatively late and fraudulent interpolation in the text. In his last chapter also, devoted to "Relics of the Past," the author is a little too sweeping in his assertion (p. 309) that there is no evidence that any kings were buried in the "Tombs of the Kings." This is true in regard to the Kings mentioned in the Bible, but, on the other hand, there is no reason to doubt that Queen Helena and King Izates of Adiabene, who embraced Judaism in the first century of the present era and settled in Jerusalem, were buried there. It is unnecessary to comment on the style in which Messrs. Dent and Sons produce these volumes, for that is already well and favourably known; the illustrations by which Miss Watson embellishes the text alone render the volume a bargain.

The Palestine Exploration Fund Annual for 1911, a new departure, is a work of a different description. It consists of accounts of three definite pieces of work of Palestine exploration performed on behalf of the Fund during the year to which the Annual relates. Dr. Duncan Mackenzie describes an expedition to Rabbath Ammon across the Jordan for the examination of the Megalithic Monuments there. He finds many points of resemblance to the similar remains in Sardinia. The same author, who is in charge of the excavations at Ain Shems, in the country of Samson, describes the progress of his work there. Dr. Gustaf Dalman contributes an account of the measurement of the Khazneh at Petra, which he suggests is the mausoleum of one of the latest Nabataean kings. These subjects may seem somewhat technical to the general reader, but the manner in which they are treated renders them of interest to all into whose hands the annual may come.

Savage Indian Tribes

The Fly on the Wheel, or How I Helped to Govern India.
By LIEUT.-COL. T. H. LEWIN. (Constable and Co. 6s. net.)

SO little is heard nowadays of the Eastern Frontier of India that the dangers of life and service there, which had to be endured forty or fifty years ago, are hardly remembered. But the recent expedition against the untamed Abors to the north of Assam sufficed to remind the Government and the public of the possibility of trouble with savage frontier tribes. Official and private reports of these disagreeable neighbours have occasionally appeared. This volume is a reproduction of a book written thirty years ago, after his retirement from India, by Lieut.-Colonel Thomas Herbert Lewin, one of the bravest and most successful officers who ever laboured in the Chittagong hill tracts which constitute the Eastern Frontier. He did more than his share in taming the wild men with whom he had to deal, and in bringing them under the influence of British civilisation.

The story is so full of life that it seems to preserve its original freshness unimpaired. Lewin did not enter on frontier work without the preparation which he describes. From Addiscombe he was plunged into the Indian Mutiny of 1857, served with British and Indian troops at Cawnpore, in Oudh, and in Central India, and was constantly engaged with the rebels, gaining the experience of actual fighting and military movements. To avoid, if possible, going back to regimental duty, he got himself transferred to a battalion of military police, with whom he enjoyed much varied sport in the intervals of relaxation from duty. When the regular civil police were instituted, he gained further experience of the native character as District Superintendent of police in several Bengal stations until he reached Chittagong. In November, 1865, he voluntarily made an expedition to a frontier tribe, the Shendus. Though the particular project failed, Lewin established a reputation, and soon became the official Superintendent of the tribes on the Chittagong frontier. When the Lushai tribes continued their marauding attacks on British subjects, and measures were required to check their aggressiveness, a regular expedition, consisting of two well-equipped columns, was dispatched against them, and Lewin was obviously the political officer to accompany the southern column under General (now Field-Marshal Sir Charles) Brownlow. The force completely effected all that had been expected of it, mainly through the capacity of the political officer, his "strong personal influence over these tribes, his knowledge of their language and habits, added to his patience and sagacity in dealing with them." From his General he received words of kindness and approbation, but "these pleasant words of praise were my sole reward."

No frontier can ever be permanently pacified, and subsequent attacks have occurred, but the system inaugurated by Lewin has been continued and developed. Instead of the aloofness which had always failed on the North-Western Frontier with the Pathan tribes, Lewin cultivated a policy of direct relations with the

border chiefs; to the headmen and to all-comers he was equally accessible; he learnt their speech and visited them, mixing freely among them, though his life was constantly in danger, for he was fearless and ready to take unusual risks. He did not neglect to employ force or deceit when it suited his purpose. Personal influence he found to be the only way of dealing with the simple people, force being reserved for those made of sterner stuff. He studied the natives closely, to understand their point of view.

The native opinion of Englishmen has been thus summarised. They regard us as an unclean people who eat cow and pig, and whose common beverages are intoxicants; as a species of curious devil, gifted with much brute courage and some human perceptions of an elementary nature, such as the love of justice, the power of making money, and the like—creatures not altogether evil, but most unaccountable, whose presence in India must be endured as an ordinance of Providence or a scourge of Fate.

Lewin found a village-headman named Tweekam Tongloyn, and claimed to have the same name and to be of the same clan, making out his own to be Urbut Tongloyn (Herbert Tom Lewin)—he is still remembered on the frontier as Thangliene. This headman recounted to him the native view of the Creation, concluding, "It is a pity that God sleeps so much; for otherwise we should live much longer." In accepting native hospitality, Lewin observed local customs and ate strange viands, but he had to draw the line somewhere and declined to eat dog. On another occasion, he had to take some horrid stuff into his mouth, some tobacco water, the lees of a hookah, "a most unpleasant custom," but he "could not stick at trifles; so with inward loathings and a smiling face I conformed to the requirements of politeness." Though this is an autobiographical work, it is free from egotism or conceit. Frontier officers will learn much from the methods of Colonel Lewin's success with border tribes, and the general reader will find plenty to interest and amuse in his vivid narrative and anecdotes.

Shorter Reviews

Sensations of Paris. By ROWLAND STRONG. Illustrated. (John Long. 10s. 6d. net.)

VEIL after veil is descending on the beautiful Paris of the olden days, till soon she will only appear here and there in some unspoiled corner, some unrenovated café, some historic building too notable to be pulled down or Americanised; and yet, through all the superficial changes, the spirit of Paris and its people remains. In this pleasantly written book Mr. Rowland Strong strives to picture the "city of light" as it is at the present day; by clever contrast he brings the characteristics of Paris and London into proximity, showing the one against the other, and gaining often by this little device an un-

commonly clear conception of both. A short quotation will illustrate this point:—

When it rains in Paris, the effect is no greater than that of a child's burst of tears. The aspect of Paris is for a brief space as hideous as that of the child; but the fit is soon over and the tears are dried, and smiles and gay equanimity return. The persistent weeping of the London streets has the quality and the high seriousness of the gloomiest Scandinavian tragedy. London weeps as one imagines Mrs. Siddons to have wept for fifty consecutive performances in the rôle of "The Mourning Bride," *en grande artiste*, making a presentment of utter woe which has the abiding dignity, the harmonious atmosphere, and the colour *ragoût*, of a great painting.

At description the author is exceptionally good; there are many passages which we should like to quote, such as those in the chapter detailing the different colour-effects of the provinces of France, and a lengthy paragraph in "The Panorama of Paris," where, again using London as a background, he pictures the city at night or at sunset. There is a rather laboured essay on the odours of Paris, but, on the whole, the book is excellent and astonishingly true to life. One small point we may make: Mr. Strong should have given his readers credit for knowing at least a little French; he need not have troubled to translate every trifling sentence so particularly.

The illustrations are good and often amusing, and the chapters devoted to the life of the people, such as "A Parisian Marriage" and "A French Soldier's Mother," form portions of the book which other writers of less experience might well study. "Vanishing Paris, 1910," is rather a sad section, with which those who regret the disappearance of old London landmarks will sympathise; but the one conviction which is evident on almost every page is that, however much Paris may apparently change, she is still the same gay, heartening, vivacious city that she has ever been.

A Chronicle of Friendships. By LUTHER MUNDAY. Illustrated. (T. Werner Laurie. 12s. 6d. net.)

MR. MUNDAY trawls with a very wide net through the deeps and shallows of the past. These friendships of his, of which he tells in so amusing a fashion, are infinitely greater in number and more varied in scope than those which fall to the lot of the ordinary man. The main feature of the volume is the Lyric Club—of which the author was the leading spirit and untiring guardian—and the many notable and talented men and women who were associated with this enterprising institution. But the scope of the personalities introduced into this chronicle of friendships by no means ends here. We have records of society folk, politicians, artists in the comprehensive sense of the word, soldiers, sailors—from Wagner to Arthur Roberts, from Nelson to Buffalo Bill, from Sandow to Browning and Whistler, and from the scions of Royalty to the inmates of the

Piccadilly cabmen's shelter. As a *pot pourri*, what more could be desired? Mr. Munday, moreover, has a light touch, and his book positively teems with anecdotes of the humorous order, stiffened here and there by philosophical comments on the world as he knew it. The author does not always intend himself to be taken seriously. Here is a record from Ceylon which throws a vivid light on the meetings of the Planters' Association in the days when coffee was still the staple product of the island:—

There was then a sort of improvised levée, and I became popular in a day, by means of a frock-coat which I brought out from home. It was a huge success! Imitating "Fregoli," I changed behind a screen, and so, in turn, did sixteen planters, who walked past the chair in my coat and bowed to the Governor. It was also worn by four bridegrooms, and paraded mournfully at two funerals. Its end was sad! One day I found it, buoyed up with microbic life, taking a walk by itself, so I shot it—the only thing I ever killed with a gun.

Perhaps, notwithstanding its joyous note, it is not fair to cull this single extract as a specimen of Mr. Munday's work. Unfortunately there is no space available for more. If there were, the difficulty would still present itself concerning which to choose. For the author has given an amazing wealth of anecdote here, and with mingled frankness and good-nature has dealt with quite an unusual galaxy of prominent humanity. Indeed, so kaleidoscopic and rapid are the changes of scene and names which Mr. Munday conjures up that it is just possible that the reader may suffer from a touch of giddiness—but giddiness of a pleasant order.

La Meilleure Part. By EMILE POITEAU. (Bernard Grasset, Paris. 3 fr. 50.)

M. POITEAU is a convinced adherent of the popular "régionaliste" or "Barrèsiste" school; at least, for these two are not quite the same thing, he stands for the ideas common to both and for some of the particular theories of each. He is a Catholic, a moralist, an aristocrat, and a provincial. He has produced a tract rather than a novel, but it is a good tract, well written, and dedicated neither to the converted nor to the "dead in sin," but to all those who stand at a "croisée des chemins." The hero, Jacques Morval, is introduced to us at the moment of the completion of his medical studies. He is to be the successor of his father, who, having inherited in his turn a country practice from his father, is about to pay with his life his debt to overwork. Jacques is naturally anxious to establish himself by marriage, and he is at once confronted with a choice between two *partis*, a dazzling heiress and a penniless saint. The conflict is too one-sided. Jacques is surrounded by good counselors, and the heiress, though she is described to us as "une intrigante, une charmeuse, une ensorceleuse," plays her cards singularly badly. It is not untrue as psychology, but in real life we think the debate would have been more subtle and the issue more open. The bad

angel is, moreover, handicapped by belonging to a family of very unpleasant parvenus; and she sighs for Paris, while all the numerous nice people of the book have a real affection for their native "clocher." We will conclude with a quotation from the noble testament of the elder doctor to his son:—

Quand tu ne pourras rien au point de vue scientifique n'oublie jamais de faire l'aumône de ton cœur.
... Ne considère pas la médecine comme une industrie, mais comme un apostolat.

The Romance of Sandro Botticelli woven from his Paintings. By A. J. ANDERSON. Illustrated. (Stanley Paul and Co. 10s. 6d. net.)

JUDGING from its title, the majority of readers will doubtless suppose this book to be a biographical work of the accepted order, in which case, however, they will be mistaken. Mr. Anderson has set out on a more daring expedition than a quest of plain or doubtful fact. As he explains in a note: "The word romance is used in the sense of a fictitious narrative in prose, with imaginary conversations and fictitious incidents, and not in the modern sense of a love-story. Thus the title might be read: 'The story of Sandro Botticelli, reconstructed from his paintings.'"

As it is, the author has given us some very pretty romance, and has told the story, as his imagination pictured it, of the events, loves, disappointments, and triumphs of which the canvases stood as the centre as they became imbued little by little with life and colour. But surely this practice—however successful may be its results in the way of drama and popular interest—is a dangerous one. In this case, the work is interspersed with some really invaluable criticisms and sidelights on those pictures from which the author has drawn his creative inspirations. But the peril remains. Were this method to become common, how many modern artists would go in fear and trembling lest some self-elected benefactor of the dim future should endeavour to reconstruct their lives from some specimen of their art once hung on the walls of the Royal Academy! They would probably have reason for their dread. But even this, speaking generally, does not justify this new departure in the way of romantic biography.

Carteggio di Alessandro Manzoni. A cura di Giovanni Sforza e Giuseppe Gallavresi. Parte prima: 1803-1821. (Hoepli, Milan. L.6.50.)

THIS volume contains nearly three hundred letters from, to, or concerning Manzoni. A large number of them, notably the abundant correspondence of the poet-novelist with Claude Fauriel, are in French. They chiefly bear a very intimate character; the stupendous events that were contemporaneous with them are hardly hinted at. The only public subject that seems to have interested Manzoni during these years is the state of religion in France. Even literary matters are in the background, except towards the end of the volume,

where he comes within the orbit of some of the great European men of letters, and where the Marquis Ernes Visconti, for instance, draws him into some sort of a literary discussion. The personal note is, however, pleasing, whether it is concerned with his love-affairs, his successful first marriage, the conversion of his wife to the Roman Church, or the death of his friend, Count Luigi Arese. Manzoni is not very hopeful of the Italian language; we know that "I Promessi Sposi" was written in two different dialects, and we find him debating in a letter to Fauriel the question, "What is the true Italian tongue?" In another place he says, "Per nostra sventura, lo stato dell' Italia divisa in frammenti, la pigrizia e l'ignoranza quasi generale hanno posto tanta distanza tra la lingua parlata et la scritta, che questa può dirsi quasi lingua morta." The volume is well supplied with portraits.

Outfit and Equipment. By SIR HARRY JOHNSTON and Others. Edited by EUSTACE REYNOLDS-BALL. (Reynolds-Ball's Guides. 2s. 6d.)

In Camp and Kitchen: A Handy Guide for Emigrants and Settlers. By LUCY H. YATES. (Andrew Melrose. 1s. net.)

BOTH of these small volumes contain a number of useful hints relative to the safety, health, and comfort of the traveller. The first of them is a compilation, including chapters by such eminent authorities as Sir Harry Johnston, Harry de Windt, and F. C. Selous, and contains many suggestions as to the appropriate outfit to be used for travel in the Far East, the tropics, and the Arctic regions, the best sporting outfit for various purposes, a great number of observations upon the care of health under the most trying circumstances: in a word, it furnishes just that sort of advice which makes all the difference between comfort and misery. There is scarcely a journey of any extent which will not be rendered the more enjoyable by the possession of the practical wisdom imparted in these 140 pages.

The second of the two volumes before us deals almost wholly with the problem of cooking food effectively without the use of any save the most rudimentary apparatus. Here the would-be colonist, the traveller, and the explorer will find an exposition of the mysteries of flapjacks, cornmeal pones, dampers, johnny cakes, chupatties, and other delicacies which emanate from the camp kitchen. There is also an exceedingly useful collection of practical hints in the last chapter.

Fiction

A Degenerate

The Confession of a Fool. By AUGUST STRINDBERG. Translated by ELLIE SCHLEUSSNER. (Stephen Swift and Co. 6s.)

THERE is a form of naïve conceit, such as that displayed by Pepys and Benvenuto Cellini, that makes delightful reading; but there is also an egotism, so diseased and so persistently sexual, that it repels and disgusts us to the uttermost. Such an egotism is to be found in the

late August Strindberg. A better title for this autobiographical novel would have been "The Confession of a Degenerate." It should have been read in manuscript by a brain specialist, destroyed immediately after perusal, and the author put under such restraint as would prevent him from writing another book on similar lines. Do not let the reader of this review imagine that we are adopting a narrow and prejudiced point of view in dealing with a work of this kind. We have made due allowance for the artistic temperament that is popularly supposed to cover a multitude of sins. We have taken into consideration Strindberg's irreligious outlook and the many bitter reverses with which he had to contend. When, however, a man sits down to reveal sordid and perverse secrets associated with the passions, when his photographic realism is entirely pornographic, he is simply producing filth, taking obscene photos from behind his veil of disordered and distorted egotism that no clean-minded person could look at, much less associate with literature.

We gather from the prefatory remarks that a German version of this book was published in 1893, "but it was mutilated, abbreviated, corrupted, and falsified to such an extent that the Attorney-General, misled by the revolting language, blamed the author for the misdeeds of the translator and prohibited the sale of the book." We are unable to judge of the German edition, but in the present version there is more than sufficient material to ban its publication in this country. Strindberg himself has called it "a terrible book," and regretted that he ever wrote it—his one sane and wholesome confession.

These autobiographical pages are concerned with the passion of Axel for the Baroness (Marie). At first sight, indeed for a considerable time, Marie appears to her lover as a pure and splendid type of womanhood, a being altogether too cold and chaste to be capable of anything like an intimate love. Axel pictures her as a virgin mother, and not infrequently compares her with the Madonna. We find, in references of this kind, an old and very despicable trick of the pornographic writer; this building up of an image of womanly chastity simply for the purpose of dragging it down in the mud and producing a striking, if sordid, contrast. In the early pages we read much about platonic friendship and soul union. Axel, after looking through a volume containing illustrations of famous sculptures, comes to the conclusion that Marie does not resemble the "full-bosomed and broad-hipped" Venus, nor Juno, "the fertile mother," nor Minerva, "the blue-stocking, the old maid, who hides her flat bosom under a coat of mail," rather Diana in species, but not in genus. The Madonna theory is on the wane, and soul union conversations cease to exist.

Axel's passion expresses itself without the least restraint. He has a *liaison* with Marie, to the complete indifference of the Baron, who is making violent and very improper love to his cousin. Passing over many unpleasant incidents, we eventually find the lovers married, and the remainder of the book is devoted to a portrayal of the depraved and utterly worthless Marie. There

are innumerable quarrels, innumerable leave-takings, but always Axel returns under the spell of her horrible magic. No matter how stormy the scene, how bitter the words, a glimpse of Marie's stockinged legs is sufficient to make amends for the past. Though Axel's manliness is crushed under the small foot of his wife, he never forgets that it is a pretty foot, with pink toes and exquisitely formed nails. We are expected to sympathise with Axel's mental and spiritual tortures; but we cannot sympathise with a madman who, driven by the power of Karma, returns again and again to a woman who is not only a prostitute, but is also capable of a perverse form of sexuality with her own sex. It is this Lesbian element that particularly revolts us, and has forced us to take a rigid stand in condemning the book as grossly immoral. There is only one unintentionally humorous passage in the volume, and that is probably due to the translator. On page 137 we find: "The Baroness opened the folding doors and secretly kissed me between the wings." Marie could never have kissed an angel. Strindberg writes: "Don't you know that I am the devil incarnate?" After reading these filthy "Confessions" we have no difficulty in taking the author at his word.

Rogues in Arcady. By SIR WILLIAM MAGNAY, BART.
(Ward, Lock and Co. 6s.)

LOVERS of detective stories always desire, above all, to be puzzled, and far prefer to be mystified over the solution of the plot, never resenting wild-goose chases after false scents, than to have the solution of the mystery made obvious from the beginning. Readers such as these will hardly be satisfied with Sir William Magnay's latest novel, for one needs to enter but a short distance into the book in order to discover the solution of whatever mystery exists. To be fair, it must be admitted that the author makes no attempt to leave his readers in any doubt, but takes them into his confidence without hesitation. Thus the interest of the reader is confined to the manner in which the author in the course of over three hundred pages attains to rough justice. In the first essential of a detective story the present book therefore falls short, and it cannot be said that it recoups in any other respect its failure in this one. The author does not show himself in any manner a master of characterisation. The *personæ* are crudely and clumsily drawn. They are obviously artificial and altogether lacking in conviction. Not for a moment does the reader, even in the most critical passages, imagine that he is dealing with human beings or living episodes. The strings by which the figures are pulled and the consequential imperfections lie open, un concealed, on every page. Not once is the reader moved. He feels like a father who has taken his children to a pantomime, in which he himself is not bored so much as untouched by the performance. The best that can be said of this story is quite negative. It is harmless, and may serve to rest a jaded mind, but it will not invigorate it.

Our Nance: A Story of Whitechapel. By W. BRAUNSTON JONES. (John Ouseley. 6s.)

WE had hoped, when we saw the title of this book, that we were going to enjoy a real romance of the slums; but although Nance is a thorough little Cockney, and her brother a costermonger, the West plays quite as important a part as does the East in this drama. And between the two extremes the story filters down until the characters appear very much like middle-class people using the language of Whitechapel; and surely sometimes Nance's excruciating accent and total lack of grammar must have got on the nerves of her artist lover, yet there is no suggestion of any steps being taken to set these deficiencies right, even after they are married. The two men who wish to gain possession of the girl because they admire her physical beauty seem irrelevant and merely introduced for melodramatic effect. If Mr. Jones had confined himself to developing further the characters with whom Nance is first acquainted, we think a much more interesting book would have been the result.

Saimi Tervola. By HILMA PYLKKANEN. (Bernard Grasset, Paris. 3 fr. 50.)

THE combinations of this story are not very new; it is one of the variations of the problem sketched in those twelve lines of which the first two are:—

"Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen,
Das hat einen Andern erwählt."

It is true that Heine does not introduce the complication of a son born of the marriage of the two real principals, nor does the element of patriotism or nationality enter into his synopsis, but both of these additions are familiar and do not essentially alter the problem. What marks the story as a product of the North is the fact that Saimi is first estranged from her first husband and lover not by the latter's libertinism but by his occasional, if violent, lapses from sobriety. The parting of these two is told with admirable skill and pathos, and our sympathies are called forth strongly for the erring but wronged husband. His successor is never very sympathetic; it may be that he would exercise a greater fascination for the purists of Finnish patriotism, but to the undiscerning foreigner his rival's generous revolt against Russian oppression seems at least as meritorious, and more unselfish. The Finnish background is full of charm, and the characterisation is good: Saimi is a little too *détraquée*, a little too ancient and modern, to be wholly attractive, but the poignancy of her situation, with three passions at strife within her—love of country, child, and of lover—make her at least interesting. We could wish she had been kinder to her first husband.

Shorter Notices

POSSIBLY Mr. Leslie Mortimer intended to make a "shocker" of "The Sin of Youth" (John Long. 6s.), but, granted such an intention, the stilted and ultra-melodramatic phrasing, and the *clichés* occurring on almost every page, mar even that effect. The plot is a tangle which we feel sure—and rightly—will be unravelled on the last page, where those who have survived poison mysteries, hunting tragedies, broken engagements, and the passionate love of southern—not very southern—temperaments, are made ecstatically happy with the assistance of a pile of buried treasure, valued at one million sterling, and not confiscated by the Government of the country in which it was hidden. All these properties of the melodrama, and many more, are introduced here, but minus the touch of realism which makes such things effective. The characters do not live; we feel in reading that they are mere puppets, jerked hither and thither at the author's fancy, and we close the book with relief. We credit the author with the ability to turn a neat phrase once in a while, but would suggest an attempt on his part to draw consistent portraits before adventuring further in the fiction market.

It is as a study in Scotch temperaments that "A Diana of Quebec" (Smith, Elder and Co. 6s.) is mainly to be commended. Mary Simpson, the "Diana" who won the susceptible heart of Captain Nelson, of the *Albemarle* frigate, and, after he had gone, captured the Scotch Major Mathews, is an admirable specimen of sympathetic portraiture. Mathews himself, precise and methodical, hard and shrewd on the surface, yet tender and deceived even by himself in reality, forms another finely-drawn character. Miss McIlwraith's style is a trifle stodgy at times; Quebec itself is described rather too minutely, and at some points the action is slower than necessary. Still, this is an old-fashioned story of old-fashioned people, bearing a distinct atmosphere of the time and place with which it is concerned; its people are real and lifelike, and on the whole the book is to be welcomed as a fresh, clean story, not dealing overmuch in psychological analysis, but rather showing us a man and a woman—with the inevitable end.

"Sheila Vedder" (T. Fisher Unwin. 6s.) is the story of young Jan Vedder, son of the original Jan, and of how he wooed and won Sheila Jarrow at Lerwick, in the Shetlands, before tourists descended on the islands to intone guide-book paragraphs in a sort of Yankee litany. Lest the course of true love should run too smoothly, Sheila's brother Donald makes some slight trouble between the lovers for a time by causing his sister to conceal certain things from Jan, but this is so slight a matter as to lead us to suspect that it was merely introduced in order to spin out the story to a reasonable length. Nevertheless, Miss Barr's book is not one to pass by unread, for it tells of a people concerning whom few records remain, and introduces us to a simple life more desirable than that of hygiene and bacteriological extermination.

The characters in "The Shoreless Sea" (Holden and Hardingham. 6s.) might have been chosen from nearly any newspaper serial. Beatrice, the divorced wife of Armiger, the hero; Cynthia, the woman who married him in ignorance of his past history; Evan Fane, the man who ruined Beatrice's life; and even Armiger himself, are all well-known and well-worn types. Yet there is a quality about this book, a certain richness of expression, marred though it is by a *bourgeois* stamp on the story, apart from its characters, which lifts it to the level of good fiction. Evan Fane, the villain of the piece, is a somewhat hazy character; we do not see him clearly, and are unable to judge whether Miss Lethbridge intended to make him bad all through or bad with streaks of goodness. Cynthia is a pale and unconvincing character, atoned for by the force and clearness with which Frances, her self-righteous sister, is drawn. Notwithstanding some very evident faults, this is an attractive and—in some moods—a fascinating book. It possesses the fine quality of inevitableness, and the authoress, having written a book of such interest, may yet do great work if she will only find her own characters and work from life.

Adam, "Eve's Second Husband" (Constable and Co. 6s.), is shown to us in such a way that we can well understand how it was that Eve helped him to hide, went with him through the garden of youth and out into the prosaic world of middle age, loving and forgiving always. He makes his entry to the book as purchaser of the *Booneville Banner*, which the inconspicuous, over-virtuous first husband edited up to the day of his death. Having annexed the paper, Adam annexes the widow, and proceeds to make his way to Congress and the governorship of Tennessee. He accomplishes these aims, mainly by boundless belief in himself and a capacity for bluffing others into a like belief. In telling this story of a second husband Miss Harris has told the story of the wife, and told it well; and, since the book is written in the first person, the very clever—sometimes too clever—epigrams are all of Eve's making, but we feel that they do not belong to her, and are alien from her character. This, however, by no means spoils the book, which is a crisp, forceful, and wholly enjoyable piece of work.

The story which Mr. Upton Sinclair has to tell in "Love's Pilgrimage" (W. Heinemann. 6s.) is a rather commonplace one, for most young authors have trials and disappointments, and many know the bitterness of hack-writing at the expense of creative work. The chief trouble here is that Mr. Sinclair has chosen to imagine his author as a genius with a very large G, and, furthermore, has striven to invest commonplace happenings with tragic significance from page 1 to page 438. The "pilgrimage" does not reveal itself to us as we read, but rather are we conducted along that way by Mr. Sinclair, who, after the fashion of a tourist's guide, pauses at intervals that he may declaim stridently on the wonders of the journey. We are never allowed to forget the presence of our guide, or to judge for ourselves, for this is a "personally-conducted" tour, and the guide is bent on making himself conspicuous. Mr. Sinclair has treated

the evils that beset the path of Genius in the States as he treated the Chicago canning businesses in "The Jungle," but literature is not pork-packing, and "Love's Pilgrimage" is not likely to bring a boycott down upon American publishers, nor to modify the inevitable drawbacks attendant on literature and journalism as careers. Again, in matters of sex, the very commonplace relations between the hero and his wife are shouted to us as if they bore an abnormal significance, whereas they embody a lesson which every married couple have learnt and—in spite of Mr. Sinclair—will go on learning for themselves.

Music

Two Concerts

THE music of the week has been unimportant. At the Promenade Concerts we have had one new composition of no special value, but of undoubted cleverness in workmanship. It is a Suite of Intermezzi Goldoniani for strings by Enrico Bossi, who has something to say in twentieth-century idiom better deserving attention than studies in the language of the eighteenth. Queen's Hall is one of the most serious places in London, and the incursion of Mr. Pelissier with his infinite jest gained additional piquancy from the solemnity of the place. Indeed, more than half the public would not believe, till forced to laugh in spite of themselves at Mr. Pelissier's wit and fanciful humour, that the Queen's Hall and the Queen's Hall orchestra could be enlisted in the service of Comedy. The fooling is very ingenious, and never oversteps the limits of good taste. Moreover, it is of the kind possible only to people with an ample store of solid knowledge and a good supply of brains, and that lifts it out of the category of mere flippancy, and makes it worth listening to for the greater part of an afternoon. There is quite a sound artistic moral to be drawn from the bulky frame and vast complexity of the Follyphone and the tiny sounds that proceed from its cavernous depths.

The Theatre

"The Great John Ganton" at the Aldwych Theatre

IT will never be believed, I suppose, but I am sure the London public would love to welcome American plays if only the Fates who rule this sort of thing would permit. "The Great John Ganton," by Mr. Hartley J. Manners—founded on Mr. Eddy's novel—is one more popular success in the States which, with the best will in the

world, we are unable thoroughly to enjoy. An American dramatist who has had great successes here was telling me of a new play of his, the other day, and I wanted to know which management would produce it in London. He told me he wrote it for America, and not for Europe. And there lies the heart of the matter. There are certain plays for the New and certain plays for the Old World, and just a very few that are for all countries and almost all time. "John Ganton" is not in the last class, I fear; it is possible that "Milestones" is such an one, for it is written by two cosmopolitans, one of whom is by birth an American, one an Englishman, and wherever it has been produced it has given delight. But if "John Ganton" is of America for the Americans, at least we can appreciate the consistent efforts of Mr. George Fawcett to make something of the title-rôle. It is no easy task to transform an old, self-satisfied pork-packer of Chicago, who eventually becomes sentimental, into an interesting stage figure; but Mr. Fawcett gets near it now and then—far nearer than any other actor we know could do.

The story with its details of stocks that are rigged, and stockyards that are made successful on lines of graft and craft, is not amusing. The Will Ganton of Mr. Eric Maturin is clearly and well played, yet it does not convince. His love affair with the May Kating of Miss Laura Cowie is a convention of the stage, and that lady's outburst in the office of old John Ganton is a trick of the theatre which loses all point by Miss Cowie's violent attempt to make it dramatic. Alas, that such beautiful eyes should hold so little expression just at the moment when it is most needed. Miss Mabel Trevor is able to give a quite realistic performance of Mrs. Wilton, a well-worn type of the worldly wife of a business man, who means to enjoy the days of her vanity while she may. Miss Hemingway's simple and beautiful Hester Ganton, the much-tried daughter of the great and inconsiderate John, was the truest and most pleasant part of the long four acts—but then one does not see very much of her, nor does she really help forward the action of the play or affect its issues. Here and there the dialogue is finely written. The scene between the elder and younger Ganton, in which Will tells of his unfortunate speculation on 'Change, and the father offers to pay his debts if the son gives up his love—of course, the father hates the idea of the marriage because it is a play—is compact and true. But, generally speaking, the conversations of the people of the play are affected and rather dull. In any case, we are grateful to Mr. Louis Meyer and Sir Joseph Beecham for showing us once more just the sort of thing the Americans like, and for allowing us to see Mr. George Fawcett in a part which he handles so boldly and has mastered in every detail.

EGAN MEW.

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